

# San Juan Island

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
San Juan Island National Historical Park



## English Camp

### A Historic Guided Walk





## A Walk Through Time

Use this booklet to discover the many layers of English Camp's past along the route that starts at the bottom of the fence-lined trail to your left. The guide is arranged to correspond to the numbered site markers. Check the key above with the booklet cover for details. Please protect and preserve the wildlife and vegetation around you, and watch your footing. Enjoy your walk!



## San Juan Island National Historical Park



# The Pig War

On June 15, 1859, an American farmer named Lyman Cutlar shot and killed a Hudson's Bay Company pig rooting in his San Juan Island potato patch. By so doing he nearly started a war between the United States and Great Britain.

However, much more than a pig was involved. For more than 40 years, the two nations had been contending over the Oregon Country, which today comprises Washington, Oregon, Idaho, as well as portions of Montana and Wyoming and the province of British Columbia. On June 15, 1846, the two nations agreed upon the 49th parallel as the international boundary. The final sticking point was possession of the San Juan Islands.

The Hudson's Bay Company threatened Cutlar with arrest by British authorities if he did not make fair restitution for the pig. This compelled U.S. Army Department of Oregon commander Brigadier General William S. Harney to dispatch a company of the 9th U.S. Infantry, under Captain George E. Pickett, to San Juan on July 27, 1859. British Columbia Governor James Douglas responded by sending three warships under Royal Navy Captain Geoffrey Phipps Hornby to dislodge Pickett, but to avoid an armed clash if possible.

The two sides faced off on the Cattle Point peninsula for more than two months until the arrival of U.S. Army commander Lieutenant General Winfield Scott. Scott and Douglas negotiated a joint occupation of the island until the dispute could be resolved through diplomatic channels. The Americans remained at Cattle Point while the British Royal Marines established, on March 21, 1860, a comfortable camp on Garrison Bay, 15 miles north.

The joint occupation ended 12 years later when, on October 21, 1872, Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany, acting as arbitrator, settled the dispute by awarding the San Juan Islands to the United States. And so ended the so-called war in which the only casualty was a pig.



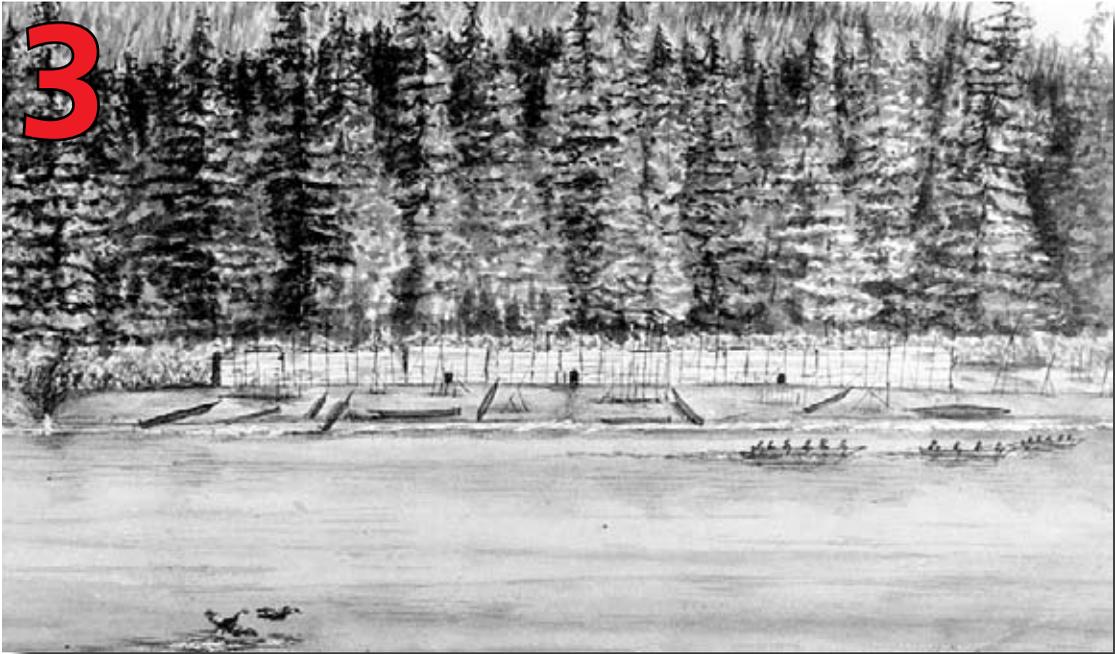
**O**ur tour starts at the bottom of the entrance trail facing the Royal Marine barracks. In the photo (above), a woman, possibly Mary Crook, checks the level of the cistern more than 100 years ago. The cistern today is covered by the cedar hatch to your right. Mary's husband, William Crook, was a British immigrant. He claimed the English Camp site in 1876 and the family occupied it until the last surviving child, Rhoda Crook Anderson, died in 1972. It is because of the Crooks, especially William's son, Jim, that English Camp survives today. The family raised fruit trees (below right) among other things, and lived in several military buildings until they built their own house in 1903 (below left). **Walk to the fenced giant Bigleaf maple to your left in front of the formal garden for No. 2.**



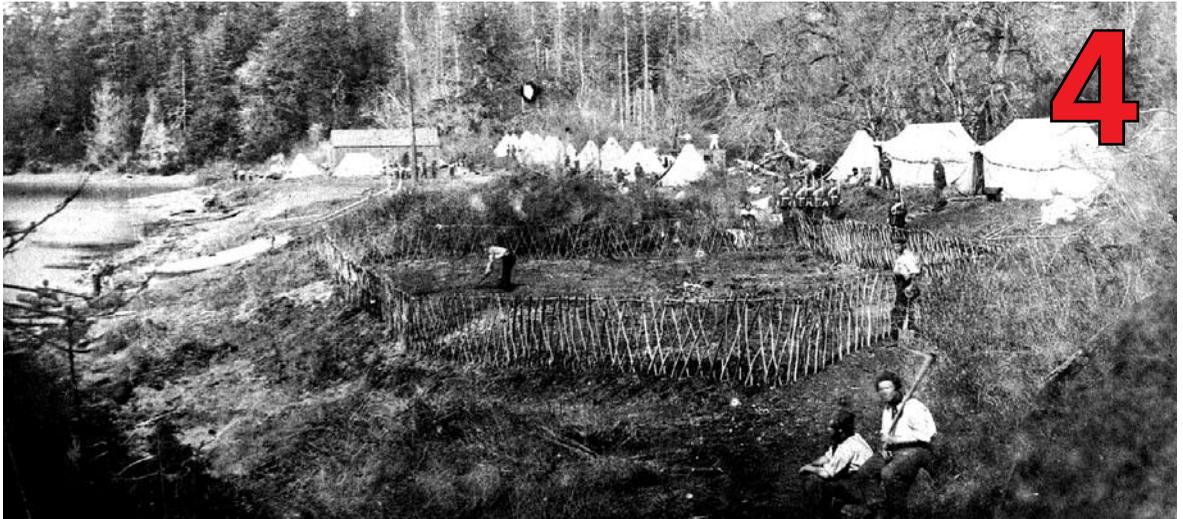


**A** group of ladies and their children enjoy the shade of the very tree above you, circa 1867-1872. This Bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) above you is nearly 340 years old, symbolizing the timelessness that is English Camp. Pre-historic Indians, Royal Marines and their families, the Crooks and park visitors all have marveled at its beauty and taken rest at its base. The tree at one time was proclaimed the "World's Largest Bigleaf Maple." However, between 1969 and 1978, two major branches crashed to the ground, reducing the tree's spread and removing it from contention as the world's largest. The fenced Bigleaf Maple next to the barracks is actually a cluster of several trees grown together over the centuries. Please resist the temptation to climb and help preserve the tree. **Walk across the Parade Ground, past the blockhouse and commissary, to the remains of the fruit orchard. Marker No. 3 is at the near end.**

# 3



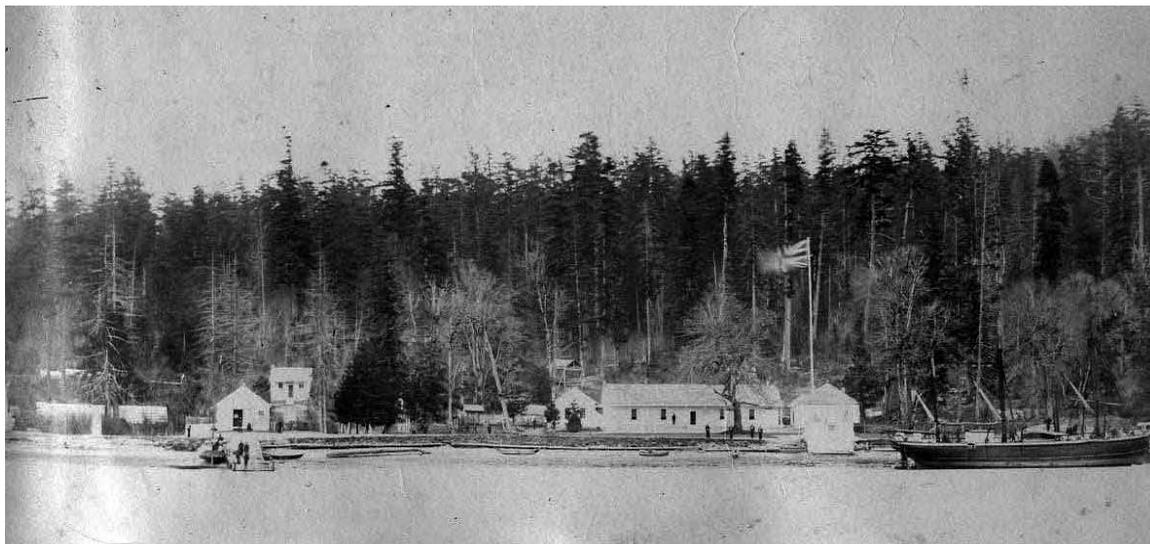
**T**hese venerable pear trees are all that remains of the Crook family orchard, which covered almost the entire site. It was near this spot that Royal Navy Lieutenant Richard Roche in 1857 reported an "...old Indian village (with) immense quantities of clam shells on the shore." On arrival, three years later, Royal Marine Color Sergeant W. Joy described "...a shell bank... averaged ten feet high, from thirty-five to forty feet through, by 120 yards long, it was the work of Indians, as they live very much on a shellfish called 'Clams', and deposit the shells just outside their Huts, hence the bank I mentioned, the brush wood grew quite down to the water's edge, in the rear the forest was growing in undisturbed tranquility..." Archaeologists have tapped into the shell layer, called a midden or trash pile, and identified habitation dating to 25 B.C. A theory is that early residents lived in pit houses that were insulated by shells. The site was next occupied by peoples who built log-framed plank houses. Families lived here during the winter, gathering shellfish. In spring they removed the planks and moved to another food source. The village was apparently abandoned when the British arrived. ***Walk over to the beach to marker No. 4 and look closely at the soil in the bank. The shells you see are what is left of the ancient shell midden; shells that were shucked by human hands over hundreds of years.***



Life on Garrison Bay changed forever when, in February 1860, the Royal Navy's Admiral R. Lambert Baynes (right), ordered a company of Royal Marines to San Juan Island as part of the joint military occupation agreement. This spot--about 13 miles by road from American Camp-- was selected over seven other prospects, including Little Mountain near false Bay and the future site of the town of Friday Harbor. The site was selected for its "...good supply of water and grass... capable of affording maneuvering ground for any number of men that are likely to be required in that locality..." Best of all, a sheep trail led from the site to the Hudson's Bay farm at Bellevue. The marines and a detachment of civilian contractors--mostly civilian shipwrights from the Esquimalt naval yard, near Victoria--landed on what became known as Garrison Bay on March 21, 1860. The force consisted of Royal Marines Captain George Bazalgette (the commandant), two junior officers, a surgeon and 83 noncommissioned officers and enlisted men. The marines cleared the shoreline and planted a small garden (above) where the formal garden lies today.



***Continued on next page.***



Captain Bazalgette (right) was a 13-year veteran who served in the Crimean War and was cited for bravery during the capture of Canton in China. He would serve at English Camp for more than seven years, after which he returned to England and retired with the rank of major. The officers and men here were part of a 155-man contingent brought to the Pacific Northwest from Hong Kong in 1858 to keep the peace on the British Columbia mainland during the Fraser River Gold Rush. Considered supernumerary, or unattached to a ship, many helped build New Westminster in Canada and then served aboard Royal Navy vessels during the Pig War crisis until November 1859. The marines were then moved to Victoria where they camped on the site of today's Parliament buildings. Three months later they returned to San Juan Island for the joint occupation. ***Walk over to the bay side of the Commissary for No. 5.***



## 7. San Juan Island NHP

# 5



The commissary (top photo left) was erected first to protect foodstuffs and other gear while the camp was under construction. The building survived (bottom photo) until the early 1970s when it was dismantled by the National Park Service and reconstructed using as many original boards as possible. In the drawing above, dated circa 1860, the commissary is up, as is temporary officers' housing on the hill (far right) while the blockhouse takes shape on the beach (center). The enlisted men are still in tents, however. Barracks, cooking houses and other vital structures quickly followed, after Admiral Baynes visited in June and ordered extra pay for the men to prepare the camp for winter. After the cook house was complete, Captain Bazalgette requisitioned "84 tin pannikins, 36 tin plates, 3 'dishes,' 10 camp kettles, 18 lanterns, 1 measures set, and a small quantity of stationery." The cover photo for this guide was taken in the early 1860s when the main barracks and blockhouse were complete. ***Walk around the commissary along the shoreline to No. 6.***

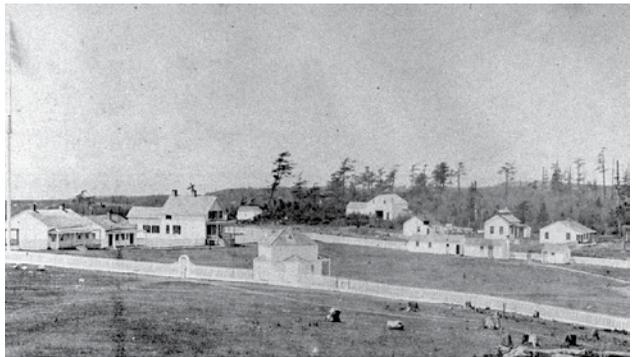
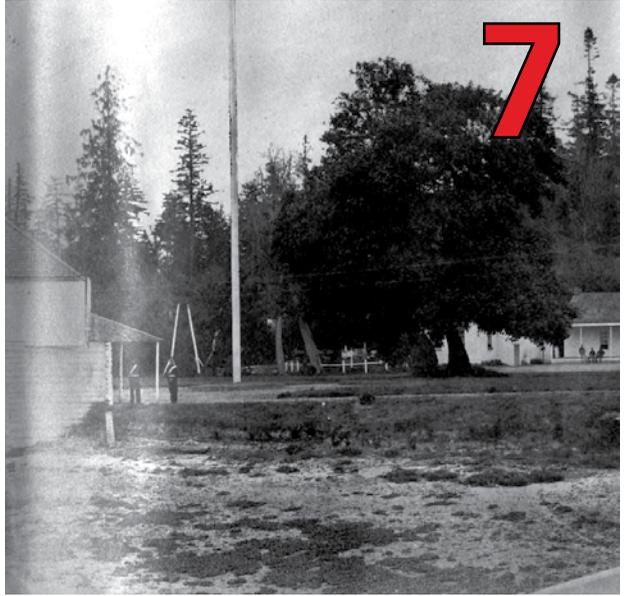
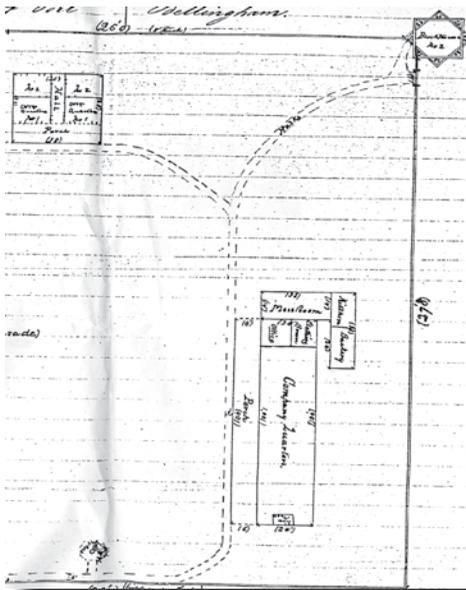
# 6



**W**e know little of the daily lives of the enlisted men here, other than it was not pleasant duty at first. Hard labor was required to keep the camp operating and there was not much to do off-duty beyond drinking and gambling. Consequently, many deserted that first year to try their luck in the Cariboo Gold Rush in Canada or to start a new life on the U.S. mainland. Principal dangers were drowning and the common cold. Those that remained here eventually came to enjoy a comfortable camp, which included the expanded dayroom and barracks (above, in upper right of photo) that today serves as the park's visitor contact station. Most of the marines honorably served their prescribed enlistments of seven years, 328 days.

***Walk to the blockhouse and No. 7.***

**9. San Juan Island NHP**



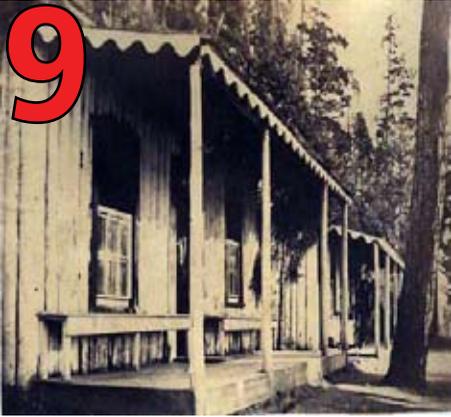
**M**any historians believe this blockhouse (in photo bottom left) is an exact copy of the fortification brought to San Juan Island by George Pickett from Fort Bellingham in 1859. Photographic evidence suggests this may be true (in photo lower right and the Fort Bellingham drawing upper left). The 45-degree skewed second story was designed to repel attacks from all directions, but the buildings at both camps were primarily used as guardhouses. The upper story today is mostly authentic, but because of tidal action, the log base has been replaced several times. Note the cuts in the logs. These could be knocked out during an attack and used as loop holes for rifle fire. ***Take the gravel path to the formal garden, open the gate and stroll to the center of the garden and No. 8.***

8



Largely because of the above photo, the assumption has been that when Captain Delacombe arrived with his wife and children (left) in 1867, he constructed a formal garden in the style popular in the 19th century. The garden would recall home and underscore the boundary between enlisted and officer territory. However, this same photo located recently in the Delacombe family album is labeled, in-part (presumably by Mrs. Delacombe) as the "...strawberry garden." The current garden was constructed in 1972. The ship tied up at the dock is HMS *Boxer*. Silt from farming has since filled the harbor. ***Walk through the gate and follow the path up the hill to the first terrace, once the site of the junior officers' quarters, and No. 9. The rock walls were built by the marines using material from the midden.***

# 9



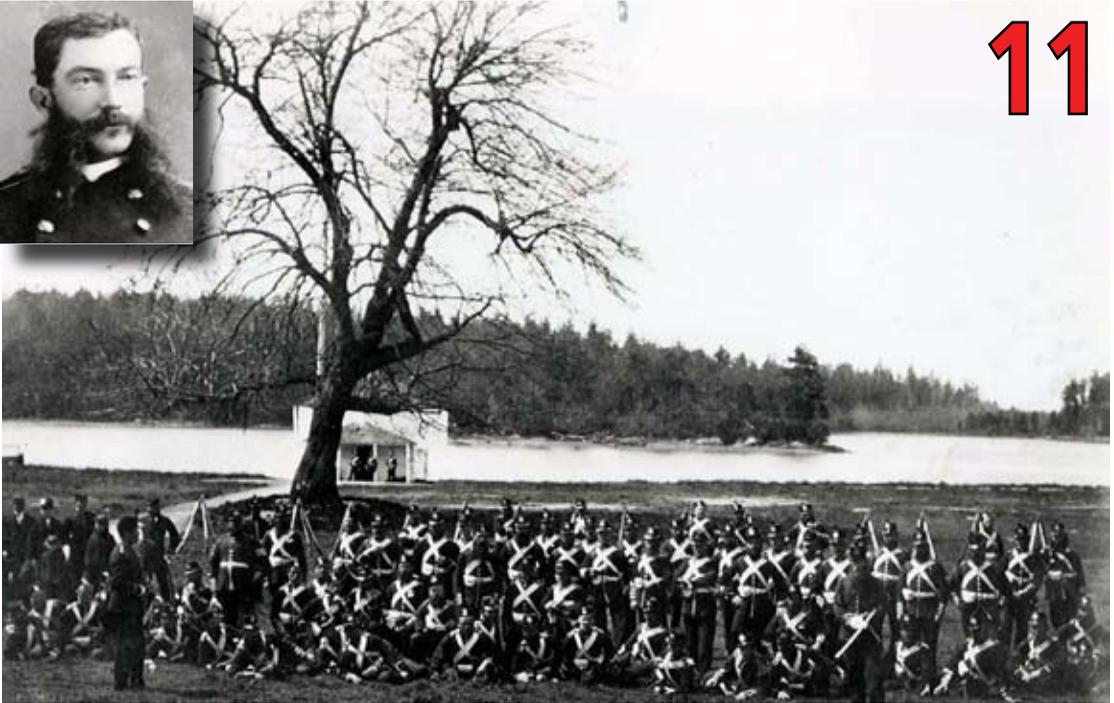
Compare the terrace before you with the photo above. The quarters for lower grade officers and the surgeon were here, while the commandant's house was on the level above. The terrace running behind you to the left supported the deputy commander's house. In the photo, Captain William A. Delacombe, the camp's second commander (far left) visits with his officers. His son strikes a jaunty pose far right. Military camps the world over are still divided between enlisted quarters and officers' country. It was no different at English Camp. From the first, the officers took the hill, while the enlisted men occupied quarters on the perimeter of the parade ground. ***Cross the terrace and continue along the trail to No. 10 on the commandant's terrace above.***



# 10



**T**he commandant's house, built by civilian contractors at the end of 1867 under the supervision of the recently arrived Delacombe, was a touch of Victorian elegance on San Juan Island. The house had nine rooms plus a kitchen and servants quarters and was ample enough for the captain's wife and four children. The house was erected on terraces constructed by Royal Marines from shell midden material. Look closely at the ground and you may spot some of the shells. After the camp property was claimed by William Crook, the commandant's house was at the heart of a legal struggle that continued for more than three years. The Crook family never lived in the home, although William's son, James, used it as a metal shop for a time. After years of neglect, the structure was purchased and renovated by a Mr. Rogers in 1894, but burned down not long after the work was complete. As you leave the commandant's terrace, follow the arrow toward the parking area. The tall trees lining the old carriage path were planted by the Royal Marines. ***Continue down lane to the trail junction and No. 11. You will see the parking area directly ahead.***



The Royal Marines left on November 21, 1872. First Lieutenant James Haughey, American Camp commander (inset) is among those in the photo above, leaving many to believe it was taken on the eve of departure. The following day the Americans took over the camp, bringing along a flag for the 80-foot pole. But it had been cut down! Delacombe explained that the Royal Navy needed the pole to replace a ship's spar that had been lost crossing the North Pacific. However, Victoria newspapers reported it chopped up and distributed as souvenirs among the marines. Five marines were left behind in the cemetery on Young Hill. ***Return to the starting point via the trail that runs along the hill to your right. Thank you for returning your booklet to the bin. To visit the cemetery, take the trail at the far end of the parking area. Follow it through the woods to the highway. Carefully cross to the service road. Walk to 200 yards to the***





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## Help us conserve valuable resources

Please return this guide to the dispensers at the trail junction or trailhead for reuse. Take-home copies are available for \$1.00 (plus tax) in the English Camp barracks from June through August. They also may be purchased year-round at the American Camp visitor center. All proceeds go to maintaining the trail and printing more guides. We thank you for your cooperation and for your interest in and support of San Juan Island National Historical Park.

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